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ABSTRACT

The Institute for Responsive Education (IRE) is a private, nonprofit organization involved in research, policy analysis, assistance to local sites, and development of a national information clearinghouse and network for citizen groups. IRE recommends an approach to community based education that encourages citizen participation in decision-making and active program involvement. IRE lends on-site assistance to school-community councils by sharing the ideas of other successful groups, and by recommending appropriate written materials for lay participants. In addition, IRE assists local groups in the process of defining their needs, issues, and agendas for action. Policy recommendation based on documented research in the area of citizen participation has resulted in the dissemination of publications that seek to increase policy coordination among various levels of government and promote effective school decision-making. The IRE library and information service has assembled advisory council packets on a variety of topics designed to assist local school councils in developing new policies, practices, and alternatives. (JEH)

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Working Papers: Community Councils

Institute for Responsive Education
704 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215

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1 Working Papers: Community Councils

THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL AND PROJECT PLANNING

Richard A. Morris

Teacher Corps has deliberately set aside a full year for local sites to plan their new five year projects. This has been done in part because studies have shown that the strength of new programs is directly related to how well they are planned. Therefore, the Teacher Corps' first year emphasizes establishing a collaborative planning process among all participants —educators, administrators, parents and community members. The purpose of this working paper is to provide some ideas and activities which will help your project's Community Council in its planning process.

PLANNING: IS IT JUST TALK?

Planning is merely a sequence of steps, a method of getting to your goal, a recipe for future group action. While some might say planning is unnecessary, ignoring or avoiding it can lead to haphazard and ineffective action. Planning can:

- Clarify choices and provide focus. If you lay out several options and test the support for each, you'll know how committed people are to carrying them out from the beginning.
- Avoid or anticipate difficulties.
- Provide a yardstick by letting everyone know what happens next.
- Let everyone know that something *will* happen next.

While various reasons for and approaches to planning are more adequately described elsewhere (see Recommended Reading), the following set of questions can help link planning and action.

TWELVE PROFOUND QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILS

1.	Why does our group exist?	Goals
2.	What does our group want?	Objectives
3.	What can we do to make it happen?	Resources
4.	How do we do it?	Strategy
5.	Exactly how do we do it?	Task Analysis
6.	Who will do it?	Assignments
7.	When will we do it?	Timeline
8.	Are we doing it?	Monitoring
9.	How do we feel about it?	Self-Assessment
10.	Did we really do it?	Evaluation
11.	So what?	Conclusions
12.	Now what?	Recommendations

Source: Appalachia Care Project and the Center for the Study of Parent Involvement

A COUNCIL'S INFORMATION BASE

In order to answer the above questions and plan effectively, council members need to have some basic information about Teacher Corps. Do council members in your project have an adequate grasp of:

1. The aims and activities of the Teacher Corps proposal and program?
2. The responsibilities of each role group—parents, teachers and administrators—to the project?
3. The project's budget?
4. The budget for the project's community component?
5. The Teacher Corps mandate for the council's role, authority and function?
6. The relationship between the council and other project role groups—teachers, administrators, community agencies, project staff?
7. The council's role in developing the project's plan and budget, including those for the council itself?
8. The type of support services and training available to councils and Teacher Corps sites?
9. Other issues of concern to Community Councils—representation, standardized testing, and so on?

Where can you get this information? The RCTR Centers have provided projects with a slide tape and booklets which answer some of these questions. Your project and school staff can help answer others. If members of your council do not have adequate knowledge of these nine areas, you might:

1. Spend part of a council meeting discussing them as a whole group.
2. Develop a short write-up for each area in which people want information.
3. Break up the council into small groups; each group can then come up with a list of questions for which they would like answers. These will then be discussed when the council comes back into one group.
4. Have a "fishbowl" discussion in which four or five members of the staff and council discuss specific areas of concern while others in the group observe (contact IRE for more information).
5. Assign responsibility for each area of interest to a council member who will then find out about it and report back to the council.

Richard Morris is Director of the Community Council Assistance Project at the Institute for Responsive Education. This project is funded through the Eastern Recruitment and Community Technical Resource Center (RCTRC).

Once you know that council members are "starting from the same place," consider assessing the council's role in the project's planning process. A helpful first step in making this assessment is to break the planning process down: Who does what? When? And, How? The following activity can be used or adapted for this end.

WHAT IS YOUR GROUP'S PLANNING PROCESS NOW?

INSTRUCTIONS: This can be either an individual or group activity. (It may be useful to include other members of the Teacher Corps project if there appears to be confusion about the council's role in planning.) Each person who is participating in this activity should receive a copy of the chart below.

Areas of Planning (Choose one)	**Who does the Planning?**	**When is the Planning done?**	**What's the step-by-step process you use to plan? (Put a number beside each item indicating which goes first, second, third and so on.)**
Staff development	Director	Not yet	Conduct needs survey
Council training	PDS	Occasionally	Ask people about their ideas and needs
Project management	Council chair	Weekly	Determine organization's goals
Budget priorities	Council sub-committee	No one knows	Make a timeline
Council role	Steering committee	Other	Evaluate present activities
Other	Principals Community coordinator		Figure out what resources are available Present to Steering Committee
	Other		Discuss and vote or reach consensus in council
			Other

(Adapted from **Planning, For A Change**)

After looking at the first column, the group should decide on one area of planning. Individual group members can then fill out the rest of the chart and share their responses by making brief oral statements or summarizing their comments on a newsprint pad. The group may want to spend twenty or thirty minutes discussing why it plans the way it does; it may also want to compare its planning process to the models discussed in the Recommended Readings.

HOW WELL DOES YOUR COUNCIL PLAN?

There are many ways to determine the effectiveness of your council's planning process. Here are some activities you can do on your own or with small groups formed from your council:

- Conduct a member satisfaction survey (write to IRE for examples of such questionnaires).
- Make a list of all activities undertaken by the council during the past year. Which were successful? Which could be improved? How? Which never got off the ground? Why?
- Invite an outside observer—a teacher, community leader, minister, student—to your council or subcommittee and solicit his or her comments.
- Videotape the group's planning sessions. Play the tape for members and ask for their comments about how well the process worked and how to improve it.
- List the things your group will be doing next year. How do you want them to differ from what is happening now?

CONCLUSION

The ideas and activities in this working paper are meant to be used as guides and suggestions while councils go about the process of planning. Their use should help draw out the concerns and issues important to council members.

Remember: These activities will be useful only if you adapt them to your project's situation.

RECOMMENDED READING

"Apple Pie," (newsletter), Center for the Study of Parent Involvement, 5240 Boyd Street, Oakland, CA 94618.

Mapping Teacher Corps Projects, Available from your project directors or from Floyd Waterman, Center for Urban Education, University of Nebraska, 3805 North 16th Street, Omaha, NE 68110.

Planning, for a Change: A Citizen's Guide to Creative Planning and Program Development, Duane Dale and Nancy Mitiguy, Citizen Involvement Training Project, 138 Hasbrouck, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003. ($5.50)

2 Working Papers: Community Councils

CONSTITUENCY BUILDING: IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Ross Zerchykov

Suppose a community council working on school safety has identified the need for a traffic light near its school. What resources—money, labor and equipment—will it take to get that light installed? Which of these resources belong to the council? Which are controlled by other groups? Why should these groups use their resources to meet the council's goal? In short, what can the council do for these other groups to get them to collaborate and pool their resources with the council's? This last question gets at the heart of constituency building: How can you get other groups to support the council? More important, *why* should they support the council?

WHY BUILD A CONSTITUENCY?

Community councils can only be effective if they can get their members to commit their time and energy to the council's efforts. Members do not join a council merely to attend meetings; they join because they want to have an impact; they see the council as a way of getting something done. To get things done, the council must have power, not in the sense of domination or authority, but in the sense of being able to *make things happen*. A council's power in this second sense is based on how it is seen by those whose support it needs. For example, if a community council is to meet its goals, it will need the support of school and public officials. These are more likely to support the council if they see that it has a wide base of support and represents the needs and desires of the larger community, not just the needs and desires of its own parent and community members. After all, school and public officials need the support of the larger community; visible and vocal groups of parents and community members who support the council can often persuade these officials to support it too.

But again, why should these community groups support the council?

IDENTIFYING YOUR CONSTITUENCY

Letting people know that your council exists and that they should be involved is one matter, telling them why they should be involved is another. Following are some questions which explore why people should bother to get involved.

Ross Zerchykov is an IRE Research Associate who has also served as Assistant Director of IRE's School Council Assistance and Evaluation Project.

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For any of the council's goals, ask:

1. Who will benefit from meeting the goal?
2. Who will lose or who will think they will lose if the council meets its goal?

(Naming and listing individuals, groups or institutions who will gain or lose from your council's actions will point out the council's circle of "affected interests," those affected by its actions.)

Next ask:

3. What resources—money, labor and equipment—are needed to meet the goal? Which of those resources do not belong to the council?
4. Identify the owners of the resources identified in question three. (This list will identify those whose support the council will need to meet its goal.)

For each individual, group or institution identified in the first, second and fourth questions, ask:

5. Which of their own goals, values and interests can the council support through its actions and use of its resources? (This last question shows how constituency building can be based on exchanges and trades between the council and other groups.)

DEVELOPING A CONSTITUENCY

The kinds of exchanges a council can enter into will depend on the local situation, on the interest groups identified, on the council's goals and on what the council has to offer in trade. Every council can give others access to its agenda, time and attention, its structure and membership, and its actions or decisionmaking. This set of resources can be valuable to other groups.

Giving Others a Piece of Your Time

If you want the community to be involved with your council, then involve the council in the community.

Council involvement in other community activities such as picnics and bazaars lets people know the council exists; members share their time and build the council's constituency. Face-to-face contact is the necessary first step to building a constituency.

Many community councils undertake a community needs assessment, a survey of what people in the community feel they need. Some are overwhelmed by what they see as too technical a task; others are discouraged by low returns on mailed questionnaires. A face-to-face informal needs assessment surveying community groups as well as individuals can identify the council's constituency and the community's needs at the same time.

The council can also build its constituency and make the community's business the council's by holding some of its meetings as neighborhood hearings.

Giving Others a Piece of the Council

If you want your community to be interested in your council, then make sure your council represents community interests.

Community interests are organized into groups—civic and neighborhood associations, churches and clubs, labor unions and social service and municipal agencies—which can send delegates to the council. Which groups to include depends on local circumstances and particularly on the issues of interest to the council. For example, a council interested in youth advocacy can include representatives from social service and law enforcement agencies while one involved with school safety and traffic can build in representatives from the public works and traffic commissions.

Giving community interests a "piece of the council" through seats on the council and a voice in its deliberations means that both those interests and their groups are represented. If these groups elect delegates to a council, then its base of support automatically expands. Every group delegate represents a built-in constituency—the membership he or she represents—which broadens the council's constituency.

Some communities are more organized than others, however, and many community interests organize as temporary groups concerned with specific issues. When one of their issues relates to the community council's goals, the council may want to set up an ad hoc subcommittee or task force composed of council members and others with a stake in that particular issue. Short-term involvement by those interested in specific issues will also expand the council's base of support.

Giving Others a Piece of the Action

People support decisions, even when they disagree with them, if they have a hand in making those decisions.

Developing a council's constituency by securing interest group representation will affect that council's internal decisionmaking. To make it possible for community group delegates to actually represent their groups' interests the council may want to automatically reconsider all substantive decisions after a specified time period. Then the community delegates can consult with their own constituencies in the interim. The result: council recommendations will reflect community deliberation and opinions; the council's business will become the community's just as the community's becomes the council's.

RECOMMENDED READING

1. To find out more about identifying constituencies, see Beverly L. Taylor, et al., *Mapping Teacher Corps Projects* (New York: Center for Policy Research, 1978), Part III. Available from project directors.
2. "Affected interests" is discussed in Robert A. Dahl, *After the Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).
3. For a discussion of constituency support, see Stanton, Zerchykov, et al., *Overcoming Barriers to Council Effectiveness* (Boston: Institute for Responsive Education, 1979), Chapter I.
4. Pepe Martinez, "Mano en Mano Venceremos (Hand in Hand We Triumph)," *Citizen Action in Education* 5 (May 1978):1.
5. Tony Carrillo, "Making Your Council Work," *Citizen Action in Education* 6 (March 1979):8-9.

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(617) 353-3309

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PRINCIPALS AND COUNCILS: PARTNERS, ADVERSARIES, OR STRANGERS?

Allan Alson and Richard Morris

Research conducted by IRE and others points to isolation as one of the major problems facing community councils. Our experience with Teacher Corps programs suggests that their councils are not exempt from this problem.

The causes of isolation are many. Frequently, councils are add-on organizations to the schools set up with neither clear roles and authority nor adequate lines of communication to administrators, teachers or other councils. Councils exhibit the symptoms of isolation in various ways: 1) they fail to affect school policies and make themselves heard; 2) they are unable to confront and resolve issues and concerns identified by parents and teachers; 3) they do not know what is going on in classrooms, the schools and the community, and find it hard to decide what to do; and 4) they lose the interest of their membership and constituencies.

A council can begin to address the problem of isolation by setting aside meeting time to consider the following questions:

COUNCIL CHECKUP

Does your council:

1. Have a way to report to parents, administrators, teachers and students?
2. Hear from parents, administrators, teachers and students about important issues?
3. Hear from other groups, like Title I councils, interested in schools?
4. Know what the schools are doing about important issues?
5. Know who has responsibility for what is going on in the schools and at the central office?
6. Receive feedback on its reports and actions from the schools, the policy board and the council's constituencies?

While a number of approaches can break down the isolation characteristic of many community councils, one direct solution is to establish a cooperative relationship with the school principal. Many reports point to the principal's role in reducing council isolation, making councils effective and influencing school climate. As the gatekeeper of organizational change, the principal can provide access to the school and the district. Mutual exchange between principals and councils also provides the strongest basis for practical collaborative decisionmaking.

Involving principals in council deliberations can cut two ways. The chart below lists some of the benefits and risks. Note that it lays out potential advantages and disadvantages for both principals and councils.

PRINCIPALS AND COUNCILS WORKING TOGETHER: BENEFITS AND RISKS

For Councils	For Principals
BENEFITS	
• Principals provide access to information about school	• Council provides access to information about community
• Principals can translate educational jargon	• Gives political, emotional and physical support
• Provides direct line of communication with school	• Council assists in solving problems
• Adds to legitimacy and importance of council's role	• Provides a forum to test out ideas
• Helps get things done	• Breaks down "we-they" barrier
• Principals provide liaison with teachers and superintendent	• Council shares responsibility for important decisions
RISKS	
• Cooptation	• Time demands
• Exploitation	• Few rewards for extra effort from superiors
	• Conflicting expectations about what principal should do

While this list is incomplete, it shows that the benefits can outweigh the risks. Both principals and councils have something to offer each other.

Looking at specific situations related to the items in the chart above can make these benefits and risks more real. For example, while a principal can coopt the council, turning it into a rubber stamp or exploiting the free labor of volunteers, the council can also get useful information about a school from its principal. With this information in hand, the council is then in a much better position to assess the school and negotiate for what it wants. Questions a principal can answer include:

- What are the school's most successful aspects?
- What kind of information does the school have to show that it is doing a good job of educating students?
- How does the school find out if its students are mastering necessary skills?
- How does the school use standardized tests?
- How is the school's budget determined and money spent?

Principals can sometimes share responsibility for decisions affecting students, their parents and the community. Shared decisionmaking can result in more informed decisions which all affected groups see as theirs. (When people participate in making decisions, they begin to feel they own those decisions and so it becomes easier to carry them out.) Although shared decisionmaking may seem less direct and more difficult to put into practice, its long range result—a stronger feeling of ownership on the part of all affected participants—argues for its use.

Principals benefit specifically from shared decisionmaking by not having to stand alone and bear full responsibility for the success or failure of decisions reached. On the other hand, principals who are open with councils may run into conflicts between what councils want and what their superiors want. Because the principal has to juggle the expectations of administrators, teachers, parents and students, s/he may see the council as just another power group with which to cope. It is important that councils understand the principals' juggling and mediating roles; the way a principal chooses to negotiate among opposing viewpoints will affect the school's climate and children's education.

WAYS FOR COUNCILS TO BEGIN COLLABORATING WITH PRINCIPALS

I. You can develop a list of the specific advantages and disadvantages of collaboration in your own situation. Small groups of three or four members each, working about 15 minutes, can begin this process. You may also want to go one step further and identify the incentives for collaboration—ways to lessen the disadvantages and emphasize the advantages.

II. You can invite the principal(s) to a council meeting to talk about current issues or provide information about who has which responsibilities in the school(s) and central administration. Your council can also invite principals to present their ideas on, for example, interpreting the results of a needs assessment.

III. Council members and principals can share their concrete expectations about each other's roles in addressing an important problem such as discipline, school climate or reading scores. To avoid confusion at a later date, principals and councils should spell out their specific functions and responsibilities as they address the problem at hand. By recognizing that neither principals nor parents either have all the answers or deserve all the blame, school-related problems can be explored more openly. This approach can reduce defensiveness on both sides and lead to agreement on a strategy for resolving problems and following up on them to ensure progress.

RECOMMENDED READING

Alson, Allan and C. Gibbons, Jr., "The Boston Story: Meeting the Challenge of Desegregation," *National Elementary Principal*, March, 1979 (Arlington, VA: National Association of Elementary School Principals).

Jenkins, Jeanne. "Impression Management: Response of Public School Principals to School Community Advisory Councils," 1974 (Available from ERIC: ED 090 665, Hc—$1.85 plus postage).

National Committee for Citizens in Education. *Parent Organizing to Improve Schools* (Available in English and Spanish for $2.25 from NCCE, Suite 410, Wilde Lake Village Green, Columbia, MD 21044).

Stanton, Jim and R Zerchykov. *Overcoming Barriers to School Council Effectiveness*, 1979 (Boston, MA: Institute for Responsive Education). Available for $6.50 plus postage and handling.

Available free to Teacher Corps projects from Regional RCTR Centers:

Mann, Dale. "A Principal's Handbook for Shared Control in Urban Community Councils," 1973 (New York: Teachers College).

Price, Nelson. *School Community Councils and Advisory Boards: A Monograph for Administrators*, 1977 (Redwood City, CA: San Mateo Co. Office of Education, $3.00).

Institute for Responsive Education
704 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 353-3309

Allan Alson, former Associate Director of the Boston University District I Desegregation Collaborative, is Director of the Lesley College-Lowell School District Teacher Corps Project. Richard Morris is Director of the Community Council Assistance Project at the Institute for Responsive Education.

IRE's Council Assistance Project is funded by Teacher Corps through the Eastern Recruitment and Community Technical Resource Center.

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PARENT AND PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION
Good Intentions Are Not Enough

Kathleen M. Huguenin

WHAT IS COLLABORATION?

Teacher Corps regulations specify that the various constituencies involved in the program—universities, local school districts and the community—"shall collaborate in planning, carrying out, and evaluating the project." The key term, *collaborate*, has too often referred to the absence of conflict or the mere physical presence of various constituencies' representatives. Real collaboration involves much more: power sharing, "parity" or equal influence, and a partnership where each constituency's voice carries the same weight. Real collaboration between parents and professionals does not occur automatically. Many groups—be they Teacher Corps or others—fall far short of shared participation. Professional educators tend to dominate; teachers, administrators and university personnel tend to make the most suggestions, exercise the most influence and take on the most responsibility, *even in areas outside their expertise*.

This can't help but inhibit collaboration. How can there be a real sharing of ideas and parity among constituencies when the voice of professionals is listened to more closely?

Parents and community members can hardly take advantage of the opportunity to share in educational decisions, work with professionals and develop leadership skills when their voice carries less weight. Parents are thus put in the position of continually deferring to professionals.

Not every situation is marked by deference, of course; they vary with the individuals and circumstances involved. But, "take over" by professionals does occur with enough frequency to make real collaboration all but impossible.

HOW CAN YOU TELL IF YOUR GROUP REALLY COLLABORATES?

What to look for:

During your next group meeting, observe the interaction patterns of your discussion by noting:

- Which constituency does the most talking
- Which constituency most often gets its way

How to look for it:

Without telling the group exactly what is being observed, assign an observer to count the number of comments made by parents, teachers, administrators, university personnel and other constituencies represented in your group.

The observer can also note which constituency makes suggestions and whose suggestions are adopted by the group.

Share your observations with the group at the next meeting.

WHY IS COLLABORATION DIFFICULT?

It is no accident that teachers, administrators and university personnel are listened to more than parents. There is an *expectation* that what professionals say is somehow more important because they have higher status and more prestige than many parents in our society, and because most groups are *structured* to uphold the dominant position of professionals.

While listening more to professional educators may be appropriate if the topic under discussion is curriculum or teaching methods, it becomes a problem when generalized to other areas like community affairs, fund-raising and public relations. Deference to professionals, especially in areas unrelated to their expertise, definitely interferes with efforts to collaborate.

STRUCTURE

The second factor inhibiting real collaboration is the way the policy board, council or task force is organized. It almost always reinforces the dominant position of professional educators. University personnel, administrators or teachers are most often chosen to occupy the leadership positions; they chair councils and lead task forces. "Rewards" like tuition remittance and conference attendance accrue to them. They frequently decide when and where the group will meet—usually on their "turf", at a time most convenient for them.

These expectations and structural factors transmit a "message" to participants just as surely as if it were posted: professionals are more important and should be listened to more. Only by breaking down these traditional expectations and structural barriers can a new message, encouraging real collaboration between parents and professionals, come through.

A NEW WAY TO THINK ABOUT COLLABORATION

Typically, the expectations and structures that perpetuate professional dominance are ignored. Instead, when collaboration fails, "uncommitted" professional educators or "unconcerned" parents are blamed. This follows from the traditional belief that merely *persuading* the various constituencies that sharing influence or decision-making is a good idea will make collaboration occur. As experience has shown, however, this is not the case.

Rather than thinking of collaboration as a single entity, achieved through good intentions, consider its three separate but equally necessary parts—an expectation, a structure and a behavior.

COLLABORATION

An Expectation Do participants believe all constituencies *should share in:*	**A Structure** Is the group set up or organized for *collaboration* in:	**A Behavior** Do the actual *interaction* patterns reflect collaboration in.
• Discussion • Influencing the outcome	• Leadership patterns • Reward system • Decision-making mechanisms	• Number of comments • Influence measures

EXPECTATIONS

Professional educators possess specialized knowledge about education. No one can debate that and, in our society at present, possession of specialized knowledge carries with it more status or prestige than most parents have, especially low income or minority group parents—the very segments of the population which many participation programs address.

HOW TO FACILITATE COLLABORATION

Unfortunately, while most groups desire collaborative behavior, they are satisfied with the expectation and ignore their structure. If expectations and structure are part of the problem, however, they must be part of the solution. Only by *paying attention* to expectations, structure *and* behavior can collaboration occur.

First, all constituencies must see shared participation and influence as legitimate; parents and professionals need to believe that each group has a voice. This belief can set the stage so that partnership is *expected*. Here the group's leader can set the tone and make sure everyone knows what is expected. The leader can also evaluate the group and give it feedback on whether it really is collaborating.

Second, a collaborative *structure* is needed. This means more than having all the constituencies numerically represented. It means organizing committees, subcommittees and so on so both professionals and parents hold leadership positions. Decentralizing the structure, rotating leadership positions, organizing the group along constituency lines and establishing caucuses will give more people the chance to exercise leadership. Both constituencies should also be able to share in other "rewards" like attending conferences and getting tuition or expenses reimbursed.

It is crucial that both parents and professionals share in deciding when and where the group will meet. For example, the group can meet in the community as well as at the school or university. Good intentions can easily be subverted unless attention is paid to structural factors.

Third, the actual *behavior* of the constituencies in the group needs to be collaborative. This doesn't mean that everyone will talk exactly the same amount, but it does mean that, when the group discusses areas in which professional educators do not possess specialized knowledge, you should not be able to predict whether parents or professionals will be more influential. Both groups should share in the discussion and decision-making. This is the most difficult level of collaboration to achieve but, if the group's expectations and structure foster collaboration, collaborative behavior should follow.

In sum, for real partnership among parents, teachers, administrators and university personnel to occur where it counts most—in the interaction and influence patterns of groups—several things have to happen:

- Collaboration must be seen as legitimate, and
- Structures which make collaboration possible must be established.

Real parent-professional collaboration will not occur spontaneously because good intentions are not enough.

Kathleen M. Huguenin has been a research associate at IRE and is the major author of Narrowing the Gap Between Intent and Practice: A Report to Policymakers on Community Organizations and School Decisionmaking *(Boston, MA: Institute for Responsive Education, 1979) $3.50.*

Institute for Responsive Education
704 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
(617) 353-3309

5 Working Papers: Community Councils

MAKING COUNCILS WORK: HUMAN RELATIONS IS NOT ENOUGH

Terrence E. Deal
Sharon F. Rallis

Three explanations are usually given when Teacher Corps community councils don't meet expectations. The first focuses on individuals and what might be done to change or get rid of recalcitrants. The second emphasizes leadership's role in paving the road to nirvana: finding the "right" leader should do the trick. The third concentrates on group processes: more systematic approaches to problem-solving, meeting efficiently, and consensus building should help councils improve. But, these three perspectives are often over-utilized, eclipsing other approaches which might work better. This series of Working Papers, numbers 5 to 7, provides an alternative perspective. The first paper (No. 5) describes the predominant approaches and discusses their limitations. The second (No. 6) offers another perspective which emphasizes a political/bargaining approach. The third suggests this new perspective's concrete implications for organizing and managing community councils.

INTENDED AIMS OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Community councils are meant to be integral parts of local Teacher Corps projects. Councils are established to share information to influence the local project's direction. Through collaborative planning — with emphasis on consensus professionals and lay people jointly identify issues, formulate policies, make decisions and resolve problems. Councils are also seen as a key to disseminating promising practices among other community agencies and institutions and continuing innovations after funding ends. To achieve these aims, councils must actively link schools and communities and provide a vigorous, lively arena for discussion, debate and resolution of important community-wide issues.

SLIPPAGE BETWEEN INTENT AND REALITY

Unfortunately, few community councils meet these expectations. Many operate on the project's periphery, plagued by structural problems which interfere with discussion and decision-making. Unresolved issues often undermine the aims and information flow is inhibited rather than encouraged. A decision vacuum gives the professional staff an unspoken mandate to guide the project in directions they deem appropriate. Rather than performing designated functions, community councils stimulate a number of complaints:

- "People won't get involved." "No one knows what the council's agenda is."
- "People drop out just when they begin to contribute." "The professional staff doesn't listen to us." "Why get involved in a window-dressing activity?"
- "Decisions are rarely made and, when they are made nothing happens." "The council always steps on the toes of other agencies."

WHY DON'T COUNCILS WORK BETTER? THREE VIEWS

The first view — a favorite of administrators — sees the participants themselves as the main barrier to council effectiveness: participation is erratic and people leave or join depending on their interest in particular issues or their satisfaction with the project's progress. Some people participate because they are bored; others don't because they are apathetic. Some people seek election because they have a pet peeve or want a forum to air personal complaints; others drop out after accomplishing their individual agendas or because the group is moving too slowly and they find something more exciting to do. Inevitably, everyone finds participation unbalanced, with one or two spokespeople monopolizing discussion and riveting attention on their own issues. Councils are controlled by individual agendas; they constantly run the risk of beating to death irrelevant issues brought by dominant spokespeople and losing aggressive participants who find other issues more important.

To illustrate: one council member interested in health education inundated meetings with speakers, materials and proposals. At the same time, many parents and teachers were trying to alert officials to the need for more access by handicapped students to school buildings. Neither issues was successfully resolved. While everyone seemed to agree that the handicapped access issue took precedence, no one could mobilize any action. And, while all agreed health education was important, people felt manipulated and overwhelmed by its spokesperson; their more immediate concerns prevented them from acting on the health education issue.

Councils which work from the "people" perspective direct their energies to persuading some individuals to participate, others to drop out, some to speak up, and still others to pipe down. If people can just be changed, or if they can be added to or dropped from the cast of characters, then councils will work better. This viewpoint's major drawbacks: changing people is not exactly easy; and "changing partners" constantly undermines continuity and power.

The second perspective — a favorite of council members — focuses on leadership as the key to effectiveness. Problems with people are accepted as unavoidable; attention shifts to finding a leader to manage the group. This perspective sees leaders as setting the council's tone, developing and controlling its agenda, keeping its goals in the foreground, distributing opportunities to talk, and setting the limits on those who need little help talking. The leadership viewpoint says the pathway to better councils is blazed by strong leaders who resolve conflicts, summarize key issues, and follow things up; if only a leader can be found and trained, things will get better.

Some leaders also use "people" strategies to influence who sits on the council. One director, for example, tried to prevent spokespeople from specific interests groups from serving on the council because he felt people with personal axes to grind would control the group. To minimize his problems as leader, he encourage a council composed entirely of people who brought no burning issues. His council had no conflicts but neither did it have any power. On the other hand, many leaders accept the cast of characters they inherit (or pray for natural attrition) and try to mold the council into a well-disciplined group.

The third perspective — the favorite of outside consultants — is related to the second; it outlines a set of procedures for working together as a well-knit collective. This view concentrates on group processes — agreeing on purposes and agenda, making sure everyone has his or her say, and following a rational, systematic approach to problem-solving. This approach identifies and defines problems, brainstorms alternative solutions, develops criteria for choice, chooses a solution, and puts the solution to the test. Councils trying to improve their processes often learn how to give and receive feedback, construct agenda, run more effective meetings, brainstorm, reach consensus, plan, set goals, and cooperate closely with one another. Process training, exercises, retreats and workshops are designed to help the council pull itself together as a group and move more effectively towards shared aims. The objective is consensus and the assumption is if training can produce more effective processes, then councils will work better. At least, that is what consultants often promise.

These three perspectives stimulate a number of efforts to improve council performance. People are counseled, persuaded, added and dropped. Leaders are selected, trained and fired. Council processes are examined and readjusted by a parade of well-credentialed, well-paid consultants. Despite these heroic efforts, however, the problems of councils remain — or get worse. There is always someone around with an axe to grind. Good leaders seem to be in short supply. And,while group consensus works superbly for easy problems, it usually fails miserably for larger issues where people have strong views, no one trusts anyone else, and the name of the game is winning. While each perspective illuminates important concerns, all three fall short of identifying underlying barriers to making councils more effective; they thereby inhibit strategies that might be used to help councils work. What is missing?

RECOMMENDED READING

Deal, Terrence E., "A Structural Approach to Organizational Development — Or Human Relations is Not Enough," Association of California School Administrators, *Thrust*, Vol. 4, No. 2, November 1974.

Terrence E. Deal, Associate Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, has been a teacher, principal and administrator in public and private schools.

Sharon F. Rallis, a doctoral student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, has been an instructor at Rhode Island College; she is an experienced teacher, consultant, and Teacher Corps resource specialist.

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704 Commonwealth Ave.
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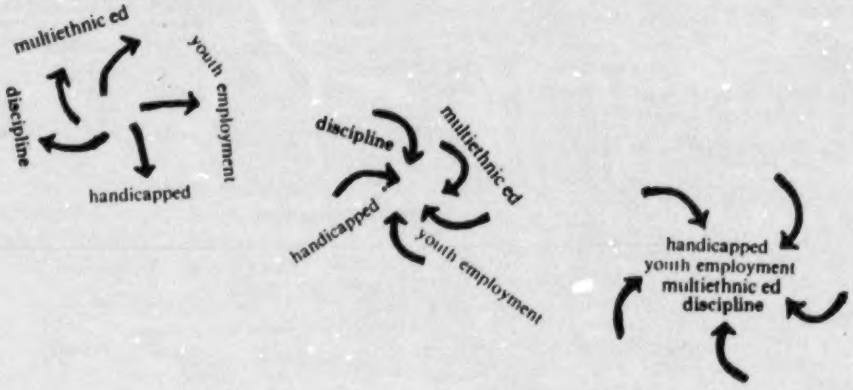
6 Working Papers: Community Councils



ORGANIZE COUNCILS AROUND ISSUES, NOT PEOPLE

Terrence E. Deal
Sharon F. Rallis

Working paper number 5 explored three explanations for why councils do not always meet expectations. We noted that each of these — the "people" perspective, the "leadership" perspective and the "process" perspective — falls short of identifying actual barriers to making councils more effective, thus inhibiting strategies that might help. We raised the question: What is missing? Or, what stands in the way of groups trying to provide a strong voice from the community?

ISSUES ATTRACT PARTICIPANTS

One answer to our questions is: councils form around issues rather than people. The council's core group should identify potential issues for the council before it recruits supporters. The issues can then attract diverse and committed participants. Those who come because of interest in a particular issue will want to see action; they are more likely to contribute time and energy. The "silent member" problem will be minimized because people will come to council meetings to speak their minds. Even when a council does not have the luxury of starting from scratch with issues, identifying specific issues can reinforce — or negate — the commitment of existing participants.

People attend meetings for various reasons: among them meeting people or sharing carefully thought out solutions to pressing problems. Usually, however, the real incentive is the opportunity to debate, discuss and influence issues of direct concern; active enthusiastic participation is rarely a problem when the issues under debate affect people directly. Ask any administrator who has encouraged sex education or built an open-space school. Participation is only a problem when the topics under discussion are boring or when individuals have pet issues which excite no one else.

ISSUES FIRST

One of the community coordinator's first tasks is forming a council with an active and committed membership. Citizens reasonably ask why they should be involved: there is no guarantee that they can be convinced to serve. Once selected, the council is expected to accomplish something but, people question, "What?" What is to prevent this group from becoming another powerless group which fails to provide a voice for anyone?

As a beginning, community councils need to identify important issues that touch people directly. Then, they can attract people to spend time and energy on those issues. Such issues are found in any community, and many are related to schools. But, since other agencies are also on the prowl for issues to attract people, community councils may have to negotiate for a share of the action. Councils are embedded in a network of community agencies — clubs, associations, action groups,

boards, political bodies and committees. Each of these provides people with an arena for intermingling, socializing, discussing and debating. Each group tries to establish ownership of certain issues — zoning, senior citizens, the environment and so on. A mandated community council competes with these other agencies — some of which are more established — as it tried to carve out its uncontested "turf" of issues. Determining a council's "turf" will involve negotiations with other agencies.

The easiest way for a council to become ineffectual is for participants to feel impotent, as if they have expended much energy with no results. To maintain power, councils have to provide opportunities for participants to experience visible results. One council, for example, identified a large number of senior citizens in the community as a potential source of school volunteers and, after several discussions, decided to find out if individuals living in an elderly housing project were interested. At the same time, however, senior citizens from a local church were working to involve their peers in the schools. The existence of two groups created confusion and the elderly rejected the council's approval. The school lost good will with the church and with senior citizens, and members of the council felt they had wasted their time and energy.

To avoid failures, once an issue is chosen, a council should ask

- What agencies, organizations and groups are already dealing with this issue?
- Who on the council knows someone to contact at these organizations?
- What do you want to ask of members of these other groups?
- What do you have to offer them in exchange?

CREATING AN ARENA FOR ISSUES

Once the issue is identified and the turf or links negotiated, create an arena where issues can be debated and discussed — a community council evening meeting, a weekend retreat or a late afternoon session. If the issue is timely, relevant and controversial, attendance should not be a problem. But, energetic numbers of people do not assure an effective arena; *all* constituencies, interests or viewpoints should be represented. The council chairperson, or its elected members, may need to actively solicit participation from individuals with vested interests even though these viewpoints may differ radically from those elected. Diversity often breeds the energy necessary for an effective forum.

IMPLICATIONS OF HAVING THE COUNCIL AS AN ISSUE ARENA

Identifying important issues and setting up an arena where diverse viewpoints can collide creates some momentum and will probably ease many difficulties councils presently face. Participation will probably be lively because participants have a vested interest in the outcome; individuals will voice their concerns because the outcome touches them directly. More participation from more people will also reduce dominance by a few when the agenda is set.

As the council develops a reputation as a "place where things happen," its membership is likely to stabilize around those community activists who want to be involved in a variety of issues. But, as the issues change, some participants will change because individuals' interest in different issues varies. Therefore, the whole membership should meet to choose the issues for discussion. Rotating membership does carry additional demands on those in charge, but it also allows them to be in touch with more parts of the community.

Issues, participants and an arena don't guarantee a productive outcome, however. The arena has to be structured so all positions are expressed, ideas and aspirations compared, conflicts negotiated and bargains struck. Vested interests must collide head-on so the structure has to encourage advocacy, conflict and trade-offs rather than neutrality, rationality and problem-solving.

Helping community councils work better may require a shift in perspective. Instead of concentrating on individual motivations, agendas and skills or on developing strong leaders or collaborative group processes, identify key issues, attract individuals from key constituencies and then structure an arena where different interests can collide, negotiate, and eventually reach resolution. This perspective suggests that participation follows an exciting issue rather than vice-versa, and that resolving divergent interests may require a political bargaining rather than a collaborative problem-solving model.

Community council success can be enhanced if the council becomes an arena structured so that representatives of key constituencies can debate, negotiate and resolve important issues. Some preliminary guidelines include:

- Select issues, then participants
- Allow for changes in participants given the issues under consideration
- Encourage participation by a wide range of people with axes to grind
- Connect and negotiate with other community agencies
- Encourage representation by *all* constituencies

Other guidelines for implementing the perspective are outlined in Working Paper No. 7.

Terrence E. Deal, Associate Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, has been a teacher, principal and administrator in public and private schools.

Sharon F. Rallis, a doctoral student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, has been an instructor at Rhode Island College; she is an experienced teacher, consultant, and Teacher Corps resource specialist.

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Boston, Massachusetts 02215
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7 Working Papers: Community Councils

LIVING WITH CONFLICT: STRUCTURING AND SURVIVING AN ISSUE-ORIENTED ARENA

Terrence E. Deal
Sharon F. Rallis

In this paper, we will look at the implications of making a community council an arena for debating and resolving important issues. While debating issues will attract the people an effective council needs, new questions may arise: Won't the membership change with the issue? Won't conflicts of interest arise? And, how can these conflicts be handled? These questions suggest that the council's structure and process, rules and norms must be clearly established and accepted by all members. Conflict must be surfaced, negotiated openly, and resolved by individuals relatively equal in power.

THE BARGAINING MODEL

In an issue-heavy arena, rules for collective bargaining or negotiation, like those encouraging each individual or constituency to set forth a position for resolution of the issue, help assure productive interchange. Bargaining, caucusing, trade-offs, and concessions will lead to a compromise all parties can accept. In this model, a council's leader or core group can either participate or act as a rule-keeper, facilitator or third-party mediator.

Lively and controversial issues will attract factions with conflicting viewpoints. One may have a particular axe to grind; another may advocate an extreme position. This collision of viewpoints can become a council's strength because conflicts can stimulate a useful process leading to productive resolution. That resolution may not be precisely what each had hoped for, but none can claim not to have had a part in its creation.

SOME RULES FOR HEALTHY CONFLICT

Where Does Each Person Stand on an Issue?

Strong advocacy of positions is essential during debate and bargaining. The core group should encourage each participant to voice his or her own opinion. Open conflict must be the standard: closed conflict or

private agreements are to be discouraged. Open advocacy makes each person define the issue clearly; only by providing each faction the opportunity to state its position clearly, to share, argue and compare its hopes and aspirations with those of other factions, can the group hope to explore and understand alternative resolutions.

One common reason for failure in community groups is reluctance to define the issues clearly; the outcomes cannot be other than vague or abstract. All can support vague decisions in theory, but in practice interpretations differ. In other words, conflicts not faced and resolved during the decision-making process will surface later and interfere with implementation. A norm demanding and encouraging all factions to advocate their stands clearly is essential to joint decisions. Once such a norm exists and is followed, it will attract and keep interested participants.

Example:

One community group was discussing introduction of health education into the school system. All participants assumed they shared a common interpretation of the issues; no one pushed for clear expression of alternative interpretations. After a few calm discussions with little or no disagreement, the group gave blanket support to a vague program of health education. Is it any wonder that significant portions of the community withdrew their support when they discovered that the junior high was teaching sex education as part of the program? Had conflicts been addressed during planning, failure might have been avoided.

How Can Disagreement Be Negotiated?

A norm encouraging open conflict needs rules for negotiating and bargaining. Most council coordinators emphasize collaboration and consensus models which usually require more time and trust than is available. Instead of striving for consensus, councils should develop conflict resolution strategies. To expect the entire group to reach total agreement is unrealistic; to expect a faction to give up one demand to gain elsewhere is reasonable. In other words, advocates should not be asked to revise their stands completely, but to modify their stands so at least some parts of them are adopted. People will be more likely to modify their positions when they see others doing the same. Compromise may be more appropriate than consensus but it is only possible when each participant has equal access to influence. Otherwise, they will be unwilling to live with the resolution.

How Are Rules Determined? How Are They Followed?

The whole group should set the rules and norms, but the core group should promote bargaining. The core group must see that ground rules for negotiating are established and accepted by all. They must be willing to intervene to remind the group of its goal, achieving a mutually beneficial result because a resolution which entirely satisfies some factions always leaves others dissatisfied; the unhappy ones will hardly support implementation.

How Can Decisions Be Implemented?

Councils gain power if they achieve a resolution with which all can live; all members can then claim ownership and will want to see the decision carried out. How often do community groups make decisions which are never implemented because they are only supported by a vocal minority? The process of making decisions is as important as the decision itself. Once a decision is made, the council's structure becomes more important; at this point each council constituency can engage its own agency or organization in support of implementation.

AN ARENA IN ACTION

In one Teacher Corps community, the overriding issue was school discipline of adolescents. Incidents involving drugs, vandalism, extortion, theft and physical violence were increasing at an alarming rate. Everyone agreed that something had to be done, but no two people agreed about what to do. Because discipline was a constant topic at community gatherings, the community coordinator and the council quickly identified it as a council issue; they opened the council up as *the* arena for negotiating this issue.

A small but vocal group representing several sides of the issue attended the first meeting; some teachers, a few parents, a group home counselor, a truant officer, some student council members and a vice-principal. Word must have spread that all sides had been able to speak because the next meeting was crowded and more constituencies were represented: some local store owners, a few law enforcement officers, several administrators, more counselors and more parents, teachers and students. Tempers flared and some factions nearly left, but mutual respect prevailed. Teachers wanted more control over students in classes; administrators wanted less interference from police; police officers felt they had to deal with a violation of the law no matter who did it or where it occurred; neighbors of the school were angry; parents seemed frightened, confused and powerless. The council's leader realized all factions wanted some say in the final decision—they would not be happy unless *some* of their needs were met. Gradually, he initiated a negotiating and bargaining process and, eventually, even opposing factions identified a common goal: effective but fair ways to identify and deal with youthful offenders and, ultimately, to prevent increases in teenage delinquency.

As the various factions came to understand the others' viewpoints, they became less fearful and saw the advantages of working together. Once the common goal was identified, the group explored each constituency's proposed solution. Finally, the group adopted a procedure all could live with: a series of steps to be used as necessary. While each constituency still felt that it had the best answer, each also realized that it could not solve the problem alone. Everyone supported the decision because they felt their voices had been heard and "something had been done." They were also pleased because the arena for making this decision—the council—would remain in existence should they have to amend or adjust it.

Terrence E. Deal, Associate Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, has been a teacher, principal and administrator in public and private schools.

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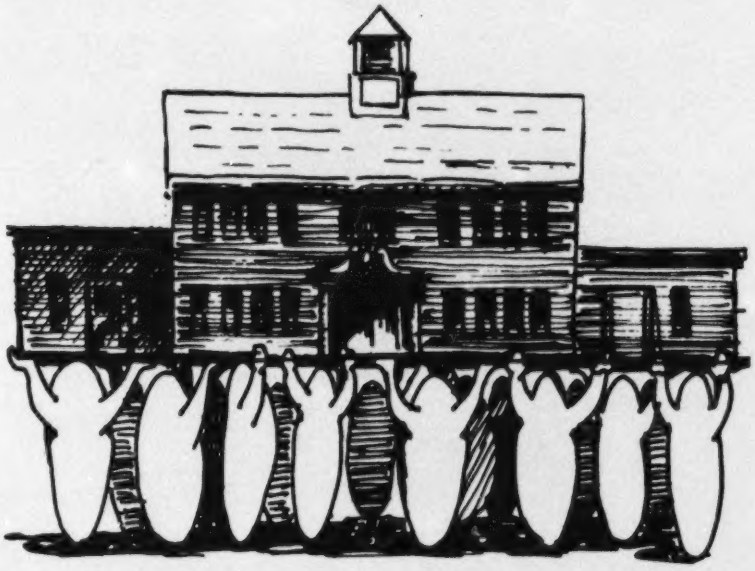

INSTITUTIONALIZATION: WHY SCHOOLS ARE DIFFICULT TO CHANGE

Ross Zerchykov

Despite a variety of approaches, all Teacher Corps projects share one goal: ensuring that programs begun with Teacher Corps funds are incorporated into the ongoing activities of school systems. Incorporation, or "institutionalization," requires organizational change by schools.

The key word is "organizational." Many people, when first encountering resistance to new ideas and new programs, conclude: "the problem is people" who are unwilling to change or give up power; or the problem is "bureaucratic inertia."

THE PROBLEM IS NOT PEOPLE

People do block change. And, yes, they do so out of self-interest and an unwillingness to share power. But in an organizational setting, people's interests are occupational: their role within their organization, in part, determines both their interests and/or their motivation to act and their freedom to act. All organized behavior imposes limits on those organized; all organizations, including schools, are to a certain extent rigid. Such rigidity is what people usually mean when they refer to "bureaucratic inertia."

THE PROBLEM IS NOT BUREAUCRACY

Research suggests, however, that it is the unbureaucratic nature of schools which makes them so difficult to change. A bureaucracy, an impersonal instrument for translating ends into means—routine, predictable, enforceable actions—is characterized by division of labor and a hierarchical chain of command. Performance standards also ensure that ends are translated into means; these objective measures of performance, and of organizational goal accomplishment, are possible when an organization's goals are clear and its tasks have predictable and measurable outcomes.

In a bureaucracy, then, change is relatively easy to accomplish: once one gets the compliance of commanding officers (to use a military metaphor), the troops will follow. But, this kind of chain of command is not present in schools (Huguenin, et al., 1979).

No one really owns schools: there is no final author-

ity. Ultimately, the public owns schools, but public ownership is at best symbolic, mediated as it is through school boards. In tough cases, the principals pass the buck to "the district office;" superintendents say, "that's really a board decision;" and boards defer to a diffuse public opinion. At the same time, however, boards are apt to rubber stamp superintendents' proposals, and principals and teachers enjoy a fair degree of autonomy.

Chains of command are further weakened because schools, unlike other public institutions like the Postal Service, have changing and ambigious goals. Because they are public, schools are extremely sensitive to shifts in public opinion (Bidwell, 1965). For example, between 1945 and 1980, the pendulum of public opinion has swung twice from progressive to basic to progressive and back to basic. Public opinion about adequate mail delivery has not gone through similar swings.

Without clear goals, it is difficult to specify clear means or techniques. This makes it difficult to specify and enforce performance standards. Given the state of the art in teaching and the ambiguity of public expectations about good teaching, there are few objective measures of teacher performance (Dreeben, 1970). And, when evaluation of employee performance is subjective, administrative authority diminishes.

Administrative authority is even further diminished by professionalism. When educators take jobs in organizations, they continue to subscribe to the values of their profession, one of which is academic freedom. This translates into lack of interference in the classroom. Another value is collegiality. Until fairly recently, school administrators were not distinguished by specialized skills or training, but by longevity of service in teaching. Their status was that of "first among equals." Paradoxically, the growth of a specialized layer of credentialed administrators and the divorce of administration from longevity in classroom teaching has not strengthened the hand of administrators. Professionals defer only to those who exhibit excellence in the skills which define their profession, for example, artists defer to artists they acknowledge as great and not to "arts managers."

ORGANIZATIONAL RESISTANCE TO CHANGE: SCHOOLS AS SYSTEMS OF ORGANIZED INSECURITY

Three factors—lack of clear goals, lack of clear and enforceable routines for accomplishing those goals, and professional values which resist hierarchical control—weaken a school system's chain of command. This results in a fair amount of autonomy for different role groups within the schools. Ordinarily, autonomy would lead to flexibility: people who are free to act could be expected to agree more readily to change. But, autonomy for school staff co-exists with vulnerability to environmental pressures. In fact, the conflicting nature of these pressures, the shifting and diffuse goals, makes autonomy possible in the first place. What autonomy means for many educators is freedom to fail in a game with poorly defined goals and shifting rules. The result is not freedom, but insecurity.

Efforts to minimize insecurity lead to the following change-avoidance strategies:

(1) **Means Become Ends.** Where goals are unclear and outcomes unpredictable, adherence to rules becomes an end in itself, a way of playing safe. Employee adherence to rules—standard operating procedures—provides an objective standard for administrators evaluating employee performance and proposals for new programs are judged by their impact on these procedures. Any implied change in these procedures threatens the rules by which the organization's members order their behavior and, in part, derive their security.

(2) **Ritualized Soul-Searching.** In some cases, schools can respond to pressures for change and protect their standard operating procedures by going public: they invite pressure groups and the community at large to sit down with school officials and "talk things out." This looks like genuine soul-searching because the school puts all its goals on the table—old goals, new goals implicit in demands for change, and the yet-unspecified goals of the public at large. Everything, it seems, is open for renegotiation. But, this response is ritualized because its patterns and results are predictable: little change, if any, takes place. There may be wide involvement in assessing needs and refocusing the schools' goals, but planning for "what ought to be" is based on "what is." Standard operating procedures, a known quantity, inevitably serve as the yardstick for assessing new programs. Moreover, the process of assessing community perceptions of needs almost always sufaces more needs than any school system can meet in the short-run. There is a further need to develop a consensus on which needs come first. That consensus is apt to be a common denominator—better discipline, more effective instruction in the 3 R's so general as to merely legitimate what schools have been doing all along.

(3) **Horizontal Adaptation.** When community pressure is irresistable and/or new money is available, innovations do get adopted and implemented. These new programs create parallel structures with their own standard operating procedures. The result is not a change in what schools are doing, but an addition to what they are doing. Such additions are especially vulnerable when community pressures dissipate or new monies dry up.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR TEACHER CORPS

Horizontal adaptation should be of particular concern to Teacher Corps programs. Change-oriented educators and funding sources are understandably impatient with the pace of institutional change. All too often, the temptation is to set up new programs, show that they work, spread the good news, and then expect local school systems to buy into those new programs. The ninth and final of this series of Working Papers uses the organizational analysis presented above to outline an alternative approach to institutionalization.

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Huguenin, Kathleen, et al. *Narrowing the Gap Between Intent and Practice* (Boston: IRE, 1979).

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Ross Zerchykov directs IRE's project to provide information to Teacher Corps Community Councils.

Institute for Responsive Education
704 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
(617) 353-3309

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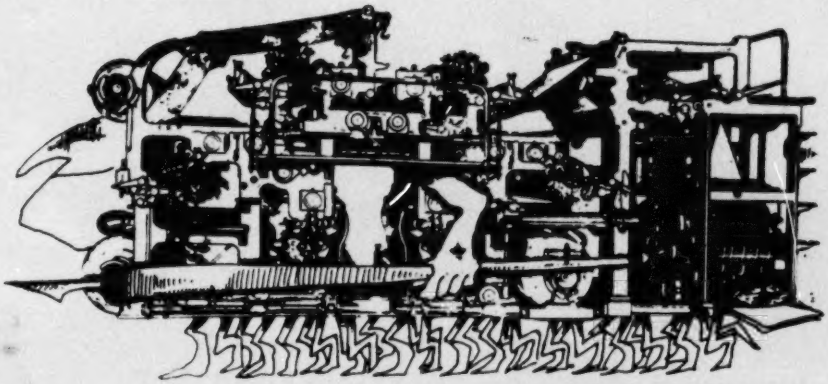

INSTITUTIONALIZATION: GOOD DEEDS ARE NOT ENOUGH

Ross Zerchykov

Working Paper No. 8, "Why Schools Are Difficult To Change," pointed out that institutionalization requires organizational change which is particularly difficult to accomplish in schools. Strategies to promote school systems' institutionalization of innovative programs have to recognize organizational sources of schools' resistance to change. These strategies can also benefit from recent research on the conditions under which schools did incorporate innovations from the outside.

SUCCESSFUL INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF INNOVATION: WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SUGGEST?

A recent Rand Corporation-conducted study of Federally funded school innovations identified those conditions under which local schools adopted new programs and practices which continued after funding dried up. That study found that institutionalization results from "mutual adaptation:" schools adapt their standard operating procedures to "make room for" the new program; program sponsors and "change agents" adapt their innovations to integrate them into schools' ongoing practices. Mutual adaptation is successful because it allows schools to develop a sense of ownership in the new program or practice. New programs must meet schools' existing needs and interests. IRE's studies further suggest that change strategies which create this sense of ownership do so by identifying and providing incentives for the continued existence of new programs and practices (Stanton, et al., 1979). "Incentives"—reasons for people to change their routine patterns of behavior—are often based on self-interest. The question to ask then is: what reasons, apart from a program's merits, would school people have for supporting an innovation, for making its goals their own goals, and for making its activities part of their standard operating procedures?

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR TEACHER CORPS COUNCILS: A STRATEGY FOR INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The organizational model of schools discussed in Working Paper No. 8 provides one clue for identifying incentives which promote local ownership for new programs. It suggests which approaches do not work and helps to identify what interests school people share as members of the same organization (and profession) and how school people's interests differ by virtue of their role—or job description within the school system. The following seven point strategy expands on that approach by advising both what to do and what not to do.

1. Do not rely on good ideas alone.

It is tempting to assume that one way to encourage someone to adopt a new idea is by showing that this idea works. This is the "demonstration" strategy. The research on demonstrations suggests, however, that this doesn't work. Many demonstrations only show that good and new things are possible with extra money and extra people. But what happens when there is no more "extra" money?

2. Avoid setting up parallel programs.

Change oriented educators and funding sources such as Teacher Corps are often impatient with the pace of change in schools. The usual strategy is to avoid the arduous task of institutional change by setting up a program or a service which is parallel to and adds to, but does not change, what the schools are doing. Schools welcome this, in part because, as suggested in Working Paper 8, it allows them to meet new needs without reorganizing their ways of meeting old

needs and goals. Unless such re-organization occurs, however, there is no guarantee that schools will pick up the extra burden once Teacher Corps funding has expired.

Therefore, in starting new programs, it is important to ask:

- If Teacher Corps money were not available, who else would have to contribute to make the program run? At what cost?
- What re-allocation of resources would be necessary for a school district to adopt this program?
- What re-organization of staff time would it require?

The above questions identify *what* has to change in order to incorporate new programs. It is just as important to identify *who* has to change, *how*, and *why* (from their own perspective) they should do so.

3. Provide additional reasons for change which go beyond the merits of the proposed innovation.

This points toward those incentives which the Rand study on implementation finds critical to local adoption of innovations. Developing local ownership is a two-stage process. First, one should identify the "key constituencies" whose support is necessary. Second, one would identify "selective" incentives appropriate to each of those constituencies, incentives which will appeal to peoples' interests as defined by their different roles and responsibilities—their job descriptions within their organizations.

Hence, for any new program, ask:

- If it requires a re-allocation of resources and/or a re-organization of staff-time, who will make that decision? And, who will be affected by that decision?

This will identify the key constituencies whose support is necessary to ensure institutionalization.

- If staff time were to be re-organized, whose job would be made easier?
- Whose job would be made more difficult? What reasons would that person or group have for voluntarily accepting an additional difficulty?

Answers to such questions would depend on local conditions and on the level of change being sought.

4. Promote new activities not new goals.

As pointed out in Working Paper 8, challenging schools to adopt new goals can be self-defeating. The challenge creates organizational responses which either reject the proposal not on its merits but because of its novelty, or generates a goal setting process which re-asserts old goals. In promoting new programs, then, it is important to consider:

- Which official already stated school district goals will be promoted by the proposed activity?
- Which informal operating goals will be enhanced by the new activity?

Working Paper 8 pointed out one defining feature of schools: their lack of clear goals and a resulting lack of connection between those goals and any sure means of accomplishing them. This feature causes means to become ends: Standard Operating Procedures (S.O.P.'s) become the operating goals of school systems. This creates yet a further complication: S.O.P.'s are more than a set of formal, bureaucratic rules; they are also informal patterns of behavior and represent the hidden agenda of schools. This agenda is hidden because it is almost unconscious, not because it is sinister. One can uncover the school systems' hidden agenda, however, by paying careful attention to:

- How school staff spend their time on a "typical day."
- What school people say when they reject a new idea: we can't do it because we *have to do* A, B, C, D . . .

5. Recognize the distinction between institutionalization of new programs and institutionalization of new decision-making practices.

The community council is a new decision-making practice. And, it *is* externally initiated—a Federal mandate has created the council even though school districts' participate in Teacher Corps projects voluntarily. What will happen once the five-year cycle has run its course and the mandate is withdrawn? Changing decision-making practices is more difficult than promoting new programs. Promoting new programs requires a re-allocation of resources—money, materials, and staff time—but changing decision-making implies a redistribution of power. Redistribution hinges on two factors: changes in educators' attitudes, making shared decision-making a school norm; and, community support, the presence of a constituency with a vested interest in continuing the council.

6. Institutionalization is an ongoing phase in a Teacher Corps program.

Successful institutionalization cannot be a final, fourth or fifth year concern. Mutual adaptation is a dynamic process: institutionalization strategies, considerations about incentives, and so on, must be built right into program design from the very beginning. It is not simply a matter of designing new programs, making them work and expecting the school system to buy into them.

7. Planning for institutionalization is not a separate function.

The strategy of mutual adaptation, its sensitivity to the interests and incentives for different role groups, is but an extension of the collaborative decision-making ethos embodied in the way different role groups within Teacher Corps projects relate to each other. In this respect, many of the suggestions contained in IRE's previous Working Papers pertain to institutionalization. For example:

- Paper No. 2 outlines steps and activities which lead other constituencies to buy into and support the council and the program.
- Paper No. 3 discusses ways in which principals' self-interests may be harnessed to support adoption of Teacher Corps objectives.
- Papers Nos. 5-7 discuss ways in which councils can be organized so as to maximize the investment and feeling of ownership on the part of different community interest groups.

RECOMMENDED READING

Berman, Paul and Milbrey McLaughlin, *Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change*, Vol. I: A Model For Educational Change. Santa Monica: Rand, 1978.

Stanton, Jim; Zerchykov, Ross, et al. *Overcoming Barriers to School Council Effectiveness*. Boston: IRE, 1979.

Ross Zerchykov directs IRE's project to provide information to Teacher Corps Community Councils.

Institute for Responsive Education
704 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
(617) 353-3309

Working Papers: Community Councils

THE INSTITUTE FOR RESPONSIVE EDUCATION and COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION

Richard Morris

The Institute for Responsive Education (IRE), a private, nonprofit organization financed by a number of private foundations and public agencies, studies and assists the process of citizen participation in educational decisionmaking. Its work includes research and documentation, policy analysis, assistance to local sites, and development of a national information clearinghouse and network for citizen groups. During the past two years, IRE has focused some of its efforts on examining and supporting programs with government-mandated requirements for public participation such as the Teacher Corps and state-initiated school advisory councils. This paper focuses on some aspects of community-based education and their implications for Teacher Corps Community Councils.

Community-based education is education based on community needs and resources. When IRE addresses community-based education, it takes as its starting point the necessity for school systems to involve the public in defining these needs, deciding on program priorities, and assessing the effectiveness of program implementation. This approach to community-based education is based on three assumptions:

1. Those affected by public agency decisions should have a voice in making those decisions.
2. Increasing community dissatisfaction with the schools means educators must become more accountable to parents and citizens and provide for greater community access.
3. As the primary teachers of their children, parents have the responsibility and right to inform themselves about and require responsiveness from their children's schools.

In addition to encouraging citizen participation in decisionmaking, IRE recognizes the value of other forms of community involvement in the schools. These include using the community as an educational resource and involving parents in supporting education within the school. IRE believes that there is an association between these two modes of involvement and the likelihood that citizens will participate in a decisionmaking capacity. For example, parents who initially become involved as tutors in the classroom may well become motivated to work on a school-community council.

IRE addresses community-based education in a variety of ways: on-site assistance with school-community councils and citizen groups; documentation and research as well as reports for policymakers; development of a resource and materials clearinghouse; and, reporting on community participation nationwide through its three times yearly journal, *Citizen Action in Education.*

ON-SITE ASSISTANCE

Several IRE projects have provided on-site assistance to both mandated school-community councils and citizen-initiated groups. While IRE cannot take the place of local resource organizations providing direct technical assistance and training to community groups and councils, it does play a limited number of roles in such projects. First, because it is a national organization, IRE lends legitimacy to councils and their activities. Second, it provides examples of strategies to further their goals. Third, it derives promising practices from participants' efforts which it then shares with other groups nationwide. Fourth, IRE suggests materials for citizens' use when establishing power-sharing and collaborative mechanisms. Finally, the Institute encourages and assists local groups to define their own needs, issues and agendas for action.

IRE's attempts to meet these objectives can best be seen in three of its approaches: promoting citizen action research, developing community-based resources, and identifying training needs.

Richard Morris is Director of the Community Council Assistance Project at the Institute for Responsive Education. This project is funded through the Eastern Recruitment and Community Technical Resource Center (RCTR).

Citizen Action Research

The citizen action research model field-tested by IRE is one example of an approach involving parents and other community members in educational decisionmaking. In an action research project, citizens develop skills in organizing, finding resources, gathering data, and analyzing information. They learn to evaluate data objectively, propose solutions and act collectively to bring about change. The underlying assumption of this approach is that the experience citizens gain in defining issues and gathering data will develop community leadership and lead to active collaboration with public officials. IRE has published a series, *Factual Politics**, which describes in detail the action research approach. The development and field testing of these materials was supported by the Hazen Foundation.

Developing Community-Based Resources for Councils

Another approach to community-based education is exemplified by IRE's School Council Assistance and Evaluation Project funded by the Mott Foundation. One of IRE's objectives in this project has been to establish a relationship between school advisory councils and local citizens' organizations. Coordinators from these local organizations have provided councils with technical assistance through workshops, informal consultation, information and training based on site-specific needs.

After setting up the initial design and implementation of activities, IRE maintained a relatively low profile. It worked with local coordinators, not directly with council members. IRE assisted coordinators by providing information, resources and informal consultation in response to the particular needs of their local councils. In short, IRE helped local organizations with council assistance because it believes establishing a relationship between councils and community organizations must be the first step in developing a local resource network. (Local networks alleviate the problems of distance which arise when a nationally-based organization like IRE tries to help local councils. Developing such networks also minimizes possible local council dependency on IRE and ensures ongoing rather than sporadic assistance.)

Identifying Training Needs

A third type of on-site assistance provided by IRE is exemplified by its Teacher Corps project with school-community councils. Beginning with four sites across the nation, IRE has emphasized assistance to local citizens as they identify their training needs; it has also documented council activities through individual interviews, small group meetings and planning sessions. By identifying training needs and collecting information, IRE has initiated council self-assessments and, in some cases, increased the priority of community-based education in local projects. IRE has also provided councils with a wide variety of written materials from community organizations, service agencies and educational institutions. Currently, IRE is developing a series, *Working Papers: Community Councils*, which addresses specific issues like the community council's role in program planning and constituency building. These papers translate research findings and synthesize practical strategies for community involvement in a form useful to Teacher Corps councils, projects and support services.

In these three types of activity—action research, developing community-based resources and identifying training needs—IRE acts in an inductive way to support local groups. That is, it offers assistance and develops materials in response to needs identified by local groups. This type of on-site assistance has provided IRE with a firm foundation from which to recommend policy changes at the national and state level.

POLICY-ORIENTED DOCUMENTATION AND ANALYSIS

IRE devotes considerable energy to the documentation and analysis of research which shapes its policy recommendations in the area of citizen participation. After gaining a better understanding of the processes and mechanisms for involving the community in decisionmaking, IRE then produces reports for policymakers and materials for community groups.

The policy-oriented publications make recommendations to local, state and federal agencies charged with developing policies and regulations governing citizen participation in schools. For example, *Federal and State Impact on Citizen Participation in the Schools*, part of a study on citizen organizations funded by the National Institute of Education, examines the effect of government policies aimed at opening up access to local school decisionmaking. This report summarizes and analyzes participation guidelines developed in programs such as Head Start, Follow Through, Title I and state-mandated advisory councils. It also describes the impact of policies resulting from court decisions on desegregation and requiring citizen involvement.

Narrowing the Gap Between Intent and Practice: A Report to Policymakers on Community Organizations and School Decisionmaking reviews the research on citizen participation and draws on findings of the NIE-funded field study of 15 community organizations. It then suggests specific steps policymakers can take to:

1. Increase coordination among policies and among federal, state and local levels of policymaking;
2. Overcome fragmentation of participation mechanisms at the local level; and,
3. Promote organizational characteristics which lead to effectiveness in influencing school decisionmaking.

A third type of effort, directed at both policymakers and activists, documents the varied models for involving citizens in schools. *Patterns of Citizen Participation in Educational Decisionmaking* (Vol. 1, *Overview*, and Vol. II, *Grassroots Perspectives*) gives an overview of the status of citizen participation and considers a variety of structural innovations—including advisory councils, neighborhood associations and community control—which can increase citizen access to schools. *Patterns* describes successful examples of various citizen participation models and weaves together observations and hypotheses drawn from preliminary case studies to examine several basic questions: Who participates? In what ways and in what issues? With what impact? And, in what governmental context?

*Facts for a Change: Citizen Action Research for Better Schools, Words, Pictures, Media: Communication in Educational Politics, Collecting Evidence: A Layman's Guide to Participant Observation, and Facts and Figures: A Layman's Guide to Conducting Surveys.

A fourth IRE effort with policy implications is summarized in *Improving Education in Florida: A Reassessment.* In part of this report to Florida's state legislature, IRE evaluated implementation of a five-year old state mandate for school advisory councils and made recommendations for making those councils more effective.

Another study which focuses on school advisory councils identifies environmental factors inhibiting their effectiveness. *Sharing the Power? A Report on the Status of School Councils in the 1970's* analyzes these conditions in order to specify the resource needs of councils. A follow-up report, *Overcoming Barriers to School Council Effectiveness*, builds on the initial findings and recommendations; it evaluates IRE's efforts to counter the factors inhibiting effectiveness through its School Council Assistance and Evaluation Project. *Overcoming Barriers* sums up its findings by setting forth the prerequisites to council effectiveness: a sense of ownership; a membership representative of and accountable to the community; clearly defined functions and authority; concrete incentives to participate; and, adequate funding, staff and information.

In addition to reports aimed primarily at policymakers, IRE has developed materials for community groups interested in school decisionmaking. These publications bring together the data, opinions and impressions of grassroots people, council members, educators, local officials and state legislators. They are designed to meet the resource needs of the various constituencies responsible for implementing community-based education. In order for community groups to make sound decisions and recommendations, and take effective action, they must have access to a considerable amount of information. One such publication, the NIE-funded *Education for All People: A Grassroots Primer,* distills a vast amount of material into a critical discussion of key issues like desegregation, bilingual education and funding for grassroots groups. Another, *Rising Above Decline* (funded by the Rockefeller Family Fund) assesses the experiences of nine communities as they confront the problems posed by declining school enrollments and shrinking resources.

INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE

IRE houses a library and information service on citizen participation and, when possible, responds to individual and group requests for assistance. The library has recently assembled advisory council packets on *Legislation, Regulations and Reports, Council Guidelines, Rationale and Methods,* and *A Directory of Resource Organizations.** These materials are designed to increase the organizational network of local groups and help school councils identify the best ways to find out about educational policies, practices, programs and alternatives. Through its clearinghouse, IRE continually collects reports, studies and handbooks, publishes packets and resource guides and, when possible, disseminates information in response to phone calls and written requests. IRE also disseminates ideas and information to an ever-widening audience through presentations, speeches and its three times yearly journal.

NATIONAL JOURNAL

With a circulation of 24,000, *Citizen Action in Education (CAE)* reports on current developments and models in the field of citizen participation in educational decisionmaking. It also links parents, citizens and school personnel who are interested in this type of citizen involvement. By sharing experiences and describing successful efforts with a national and diverse audience, *CAE* also helps give legitimacy to the concept and practice of community-based education.

For example, a recent issue of *CAE* focuses on efforts by the Teacher Corps project at the University of Texas at El Paso to provide a comprehensive community-based program in the Canutillo Independent School District. Another issue describes the strategies used in building the community council for the Teacher Corps project between Arizona State University and Phoenix Union High School. Finally, based on IRE's experiences with these and other Teacher Corps sites, *CAE* delineates issues for Teacher Corps projects to consider when building effective community councils.

The research and documentation done by IRE and others suggest issues and guidelines that policymakers and community leaders should consider as they design and implement programs in community-based education. This body of knowledge has particular relevance for Teacher Corps projects as they go about the tasks of building councils and defining how the community will relate to the school and the school to the community.

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704 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
(617) 353-3309

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